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Dictionary



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achromatic lens *n* (ca. 1864): a lens made by combining lenses of different glasses having different focal powers so that the light emerging from the lens forms an image practically free from unwanted colors
achro-ma-tism \('a-kro-ma-tiz-əm, a- (1797): the quality or state of being achromatic

achy \('a-ke) *adj* *ach-i-er*; *ach-i-est* (1875): afflicted with aches — *ach-i-ness* *n*

acic-u-lar \('a-sik-yə-lar) *adj* [LL *acicula* (dim. of *L. acus* needle) + *E -ar* — more at *ACUTE*] (1794): shaped like a needle (~ leaves) (~ crystals)

acid \('as-əd) *adj* [F or L; *F. acide*, fr. *L. acidus*, fr. *acēre* to be sour — more at *ACETIC*] (1626) 1 *a*: sour, sharp, or biting to the taste *b*: sharp, biting, or sour in manner, disposition, or nature (an ~ individual) *c*: sharply clear, discerning, or pointed (an ~ wit) *d*: piercingly intense and often jarring (~ yellow) 2 *a*: of, relating to, or being an acid; also: having the reactions or characteristics of an acid (~ soil) (an ~ solution) *b* of salts and esters: derived by partial exchange of replaceable hydrogen (~ sodium carbonate NaHCO_3) *c*: marked by or resulting from an abnormally high concentration of acid (~ indigestion) 3: relating to or made by a process (as in making steel) in which the furnace is lined with acidic material and an acidic slag is used 4: rich in silica (~ rocks) — *acidly* *adv* — *acid-ness* *n*

acid *n* (1696) 1: a sour substance; *specif*: any of various, typically water-soluble and sour compounds that are capable of reacting with a base to form a salt, that reddens litmus, that are hydrogen-containing molecules or ions able to give up a proton to a base, or that are substances able to accept an unshared pair of electrons from a base 2: something incisive, biting, or sarcastic (a social satire dripping with ~) 3: LSD — *acidly* \('as-əd-ē) *adv*

acid-fast \('as-əd-fast) *adj* (1903): not easily decolorized by acids

acid-head \('hēd) *n* (1966): an individual who uses LSD

acidic \('sīd-ik, a-) *adj* (1880) 1: acid-forming 2: *ACID*

acid-i-fi-er \('sīd-ə-fī-ər, a-) *n* (ca. 1828): one that acidifies; *esp*: a substance used to increase soil acidity

acid-ify \('fī vb -fied; -fying *vi* (1797) 1: to make acid 2: to convert into an acid ~ *vi*: to become acid — *acid-i-fi-ca-tion* \('sīd-ə-fī-kā-shən) *n*

acid-i-m-e-ter \('as-ə-dīm-ət-ər) *n* (ca. 1828): an apparatus for measuring the strength or the amount of acid present in a mixture or solution — *acid-i-m-e-tric* \('sīd-ə-mē-trik) *adj* — *acid-i-m-e-try* \('as-ə-dīm-ə-trē) *n*

acid-ity \('sīd-ət-ē, a-) *n* *pl* -ties (1620) 1: the quality, state, or degree of being acid 2: the state of being excessively acid

acid-o-phil \('sīd-ə-fīl, a-) *n* (ca. 1900): a substance, tissue, or organism that stains readily with acid stains — *acidophil* *also* *acidophile* *adj*

acid-o-phili-c \('as-ə-dō-fīl-ik) *adj* (ca. 1900) 1: staining readily with acid stains; *ACIDOPHIL* 2: preferring or thriving in a relatively acid environment

acid-o-phi-lus *milk* \('as-ə-dō-fīl-əs) *n* [NL *Lactobacillus acidophilus* lit., acidophilic lactobacillus] (1921): milk fermented by any of several bacteria and used therapeutically to change the intestinal flora

acid-o-sis \('as-ə-dō-sas) *n* (1900): an abnormal condition characterized by reduced alkalinity of the blood and of the body tissues — *acidotic* \('dāt-ik) *adj*

acid phosphatase *n* (1949): a phosphatase (as the phosphomonoesterase from the prostate gland) active in acid medium

acid precipitation *n* (1979): precipitation (as rain or snow) whose increased acidity is caused by environmental factors (as atmospheric pollutants)

acid rain *n* (1858): acid precipitation in the form of rain

acid rock *n* (1966): rock music with lyrics and sound relating to or suggestive of drug-induced experiences

acid test *n* (1912): a severe or crucial test

acid-u-late \('sīj-ə-lāt) *vi* -lat-ed; -lat-ing [L *acidulus*] (1732): to make acid or slightly acid — *acid-u-la-tion* \('sīj-ə-lā-shən) *n*

acid-u-lent \('sīj-ə-lənt) *adj* [F *acidulant*, fr. prp. of *aciduler* to acidulate, fr. *L. acidulus*] (1834): *ACIDULOUS*

acid-u-lous \('sīj-ə-ləs) *adj* [L *acidulus* sourish, fr. *acidus*] (1769): somewhat acid in taste or manner: *HARSH*

aci-nar \('as-ə-nar, -nār) *adj* (1936): of, relating to, or comprising an acinus (pancreatic ~ cells)

aci-nus \('as-ə-nəs) *n* *pl* -ni \('ni) [NL, fr. *L. berry*, berry seed] (ca. 1751): any of the small sacs that terminate the ducts of a racemose gland and are lined with secreting cells — *aci-nous* \('nas) *adj*

ack-ack \('ak-ak) *n* [Brit. signalmen's former telephone pron. of *AA*, abbr. of *antiaircraft*] (1926): an antiaircraft gun; also: antiaircraft fire

ack-knowl-edge \('ik-nūl-ij, ak-ə) *vi* -edged; -edging [ac- (as in *accord*) + *knowledge*] (15c) 1: to recognize the rights, authority, or status of 2: to own or admit knowledge of or agreement with 3: to express gratitude or obligation for *b*: to take notice of *c*: to make known the receipt of 4: to recognize as genuine or valid (~ a debt) — *ack-knowl-edge-able* \('ə-bəl) *adj*

syn *ACKNOWLEDGE*, *ADMIT*, *OWN*, *AVOW*, *CONFESS* mean to disclose against one's will or inclination. *ACKNOWLEDGE* implies the disclosing of something that has been or might be concealed; *ADMIT* implies reluctance to disclose, grant, or concede and refers usu. to facts rather than their implications; *OWN* implies acknowledging something in close relation to oneself; *AVOW* implies boldly declaring, often in the face of hostility, what one might be expected to be silent about; *CONFESS* may apply to an admission of a weakness, failure, omission, or guilt.

ack-knowl-edged \('ijd) *adj* (1598): generally recognized, accepted, or admitted — *ack-knowl-edged-ly* \('ij-ē) *adv*

ack-knowl-ement *also* *ack-knowl-ement* \('ik-nūl-ij-mənt, ak-ə) *n* (1594) 1 *a*: the act of acknowledging *b*: recognition or favorable notice of an act or achievement 2: a thing done or given in recognition of something received 3: a declaration or avowal of one's act or of a fact to give it legal validity

ac-line \('a-klin-ik) *n* [a- + *clinic*] (1850): an imaginary line roughly parallel to the geographical equator and passing through those points where a magnetic needle has no dip

ac-me \('ak-mē) *n* [Gk *akmē* point, highest point — more at *EDGE*] (1620): the highest point or stage; also: one that represents perfection of the thing expressed (he was the ~ of courtesy) *syn* see *SUMMIT*

ac-ne \('ak-nē) *n* [Gk *aknē* eruption of the face, MS var. of *akmē*, lit., point] (ca. 1828): a disorder of the skin caused by inflammation of the skin glands and hair follicles; *specif*: one found chiefly in adolescents and marked by pimples *esp*. on the face — *ac-ned* \('nēd) *adj*

acock \('ak-k) *adj* or *adv* (1846): being in a cocked position

aco-e-lo-mate \('jə-sē-lə-māt) *n* (ca. 1889): an invertebrate lacking a coelom; *esp*: one belonging to the group comprising the flatworms and nemertean and characterized by bilateral symmetry and a digestive cavity that is the only internal cavity — *acoelomate* *adj*

acold \('kold) *adj* [ME *archoic* (14c): COLD, CHILLED (the owl, for all his feathers, was ~ — John Keats)]

ac-o-lyte \('ak-ə-līt) *n* [ME *acolyte*, fr. MF & ML; OF, fr. ML *acolythus*, fr. MGk *akolouthos*, fr. Gk, *adj*, following, fr. *a-*, *ha-* (akin to Gk *homos* same) + *keleuthos* path] (14c) 1: one who assists the clergyman in a liturgical service by performing minor duties 2: one who attends or assists: FOLLOWER (helped by his admiring ~s)

ac-o-nite \('ak-ə-nīt) *n* [MF or L; fr. L *aconitum*, fr. Gk *akoniton*] (1551) 1: MONKSHOOD 2: the dried tuberous root of a monkshood (*Aconitum napellus*) formerly used as a sedative and anodyne

acorn \('ak-ər-n, -kər-n) *n* [ME *akern*, fr. OE *acern*; akin to OE *acer* field, MHG *ackern* acorns collectively — more at *ACRE*] (bef. 12c) 1: the nut of the oak usu. seated in or surrounded by a hard woody cupule of indurated bracts

acorn squash *n* (1937): an acorn-shaped dark green winter squash with a ridged surface and sweet yellow to orange flesh

acorn tube *n* (1934): a very small vacuum tube that resembles an acorn in shape and is used at extremely high frequencies

acorn worm *n* (ca. 1889): any of a group (Enteropneusta) of burrowing wormlike marine animals having an acorn-shaped proboscis and usu. classified with the chordates

acous-tic \('kū-stik) or *acous-tical* \('stī-kəl) *adj* [Gk *akoustikos* of hearing, fr. *akouein* to hear — more at *HEAR*] (1605) 1: of or relating to the sense or organs of hearing, to sound, or to the science of sounds (~ apparatus of the ear) (~ energy); *as*: a: deadening or absorbing sound (~ tile) *b*: operated by or utilizing sound waves 2: of, relating to, or being a musical instrument whose sound is not electronically modified — *acous-ti-cal-ly* \('k-ə-lē) *adv*

acous-ti-cian \('kū-stī-shən, -kū-) *n* (1859): a specialist in acoustics

acous-tics \('kū-stiks) *n* *pl* but *sing* or *pl* in constr. (1683) 1: a science that deals with the production, control, transmission, reception, and effects of sound 2 *also* *acoustic*: the qualities that determine the ability of an enclosure (as an auditorium) to reflect sound waves in such a way as to produce distinct hearing

ac-quaint \('kwānt) *vi* [ME *acquainten*, fr. OF *acointier*, fr. ML *acconitare*, fr. LL *acconitus*, pp. of *acconoscere* to know perfectly, fr. *L. ad-* + *conoscere* to know — more at *COGNITION*] (13c) 1: to cause to know personally (was ~ed with the mayor) 2: to make familiar: cause to know firsthand *syn* see *INFORM*

ac-quain-tance \('kwānt-əns) *n* (14c) 1 *a*: personal knowledge: FAMILIARITY *b*: the state of being acquainted 2 *a*: the persons with whom one is acquainted (should auld ~ be forgot — Robert Burns) *b*: a person whom one knows but who is not a particularly close friend — *ac-quain-tance-ship* \('shīp) *n*

ac-quiesce \('kwē-sē) *vi* -esced; -es-cing [F *acquiescere*, fr. L *acquiescere*, fr. *ad-* + *quiescere* to be quiet — more at *QUIET*] (1620): to accept or comply tacitly or passively *syn* see *ASSENT*

ac-quies-cence \('kwē-sēns) *n* (1631) 1: the act of acquiescing; the state of being acquiescent 2: an instance of acquiescing

ac-quies-cent \('kwē-sēnt) *adj* [L *acquiescent*, *acquiescens*, pp. of *acquiescere*] (1753): inclined to acquiesce — *ac-quies-cent-ly* *adv*

ac-quir-able \('kwī-rə-bəl) *adj* (1646): capable of being acquired

ac-quire \('kwīz) *vi* or *ac-quired*; *ac-quir-ing* [ME *aquieren*, fr. MF *acquiere*, fr. L *acquiere*, fr. *ad-* + *querere* to seek, obtain] (15c) 1: to get as one's own *b*: to come into possession or control of or by unspecified means *c*: to come to have as a new or added characteristic, trait, or ability (as by sustained effort or natural selection) (~ fluency in French) (bacteria that ~ tolerance to antibiotics) 2: to locate and hold (a desired object) in a detector (~ a target by radar)

acquired immune deficiency syndrome *n* (1982): AIDS

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ac-quire-ment \('kwīz-ə-mənt) *n* (1630) 1: an attainment of mind or body usu. resulting from continued endeavor 2: the act of acquiring

syn *ACQUIREMENT*, *ACQUISITION*, *ATTAINMENT*, *ACCOMPLISHMENT* mean power or skill won through deliberate effort. *ACQUIREMENT* suggests the result of constant endeavor to cultivate oneself; *ACQUISITION* stresses the effort involved and the inherent value of what is gained; *ATTAINMENT* suggests a distinguished achievement; *ACCOMPLISHMENT* implies a socially useful skill.

ac-quis-i-tion \('kwīz-ə-shən) *n* [ME *acquisicioun*, fr. MF or L; ML *acquisition*, fr. L *acquisition*, *acquisitio*, fr. *acquistus*, pp. of *acquirere*] (14c) 1: the act of acquiring 2: something acquired or gained

syn *ACQUISITION*, *ACQUISITION*, *ACQUISITION*, *ACQUISITION* mean the acquiring of library materials (as books and periodicals) by purchase, exchange, or gift *syn* see *ACQUIREMENT* — *ac-quis-i-tion-ally* \('shən-ēl) *adj* — *ac-quis-i-tor* \('kwīz-ət-ər) *n*

ac-quis-i-tive \('kwīz-ət-iv) *adj* (1846): strongly desirous of acquiring and possessing *syn* see *COVETOUS* — *ac-quis-i-tive-ly* *adv* — *ac-quis-i-tive-ness* *n*

ac-quit \('kwīt) *vi* or *ac-quit-ted*; *ac-quit-ting* [ME *aquiten*, fr. OF *acquiter*, fr. (fr. L *ad-*) + *quite* free of — more at *QUIT*] (13c) 1 *a*: to release; to pay off (as a claim or debt) *b* obs: REPAY, REQUITE 2: to discharge completely (as from an obligation or accusation) (the court acquitted the prisoner) 3: to conduct (oneself) usu. satisfactorily, esp. under stress (the recruits acquitted themselves like veterans) *syn* see *BEHAVE*, *EXCULPATE* — *ac-quit-ter* *n*

ac-quit-tal \('kwīt-əl) *n* (15c): a setting free from the charge of an offense by verdict, sentence, or other legal process

ac-quit-tance \('kwīt-əns) *n* (14c): a document evidencing discharge from an obligation; *esp*: a receipt in full

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